

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 01070 260925Z

ACTION EA-09

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FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7879

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1070

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT ECON CH

SUBJ: TRIP REPORT: TREATMENT OF GANG FOLLOWERS AT THE GRASSROOTS

REF: PEKING 1034

1. SUMMARY. DURING TRAVELS MAY 9-17 IN WUHAN, SIAN, AND YENAN, USLO OFFICER WAS TOLD ABOUT LOCAL TREATMENT OF GANG OF FOLLOWERS. ONE OFFICIAL COMMENTED ON WAGE POLICY (PARA 3); ANOTHER ON THE STATUS OF TENG HSIAO-PING (PARA 6). USLO OFFICER OBSERVED NO SIGNS OF DISTURBANCES AND VIRTUALLY NO POSTER ACTIVITY. THIS CONTRASTS WITH REPORTED SITUATION IN WUHAN DURING 1976, AND WITH POSTER ACTIVITY RECENTLY OBSERVED IN NORTHEAST CHINA (REFTEL). END SUMMARY.

2. IN WUHAN, USLO OFFICER VISITED WUHAN HEAVY MACHINE TOOL PLANT. DIRECTOR OF PLANT'S ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT TOLD HIM THAT PRODUCTION HAD FALLEN UNDER GANG OF FOUR INFLUENCE WHICH WAS SPREAD THROUGH GANG'S "BLACK HANDS" AMONG THE FACTORY'S WORKERS. THESE INDIVIDUALS WERE NOW UNDERGOING CRITICISM AND WOULD BE PUNISHED ACCORDING TO THE NATURE OF THEIR CRIMES. CENTRAL GUIDANCE, HOWEVER, WAS TO CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PEKING 01070 260925Z

TREAT GANG FOLLOWERS LENIENTLY IF POSSIBLE--"CURE THE ILLNESS AND SAVE THE PATIENT."

3. ACCORDING TO DIRECTOR, PRC ECONOMIC "PRINCIPLE" IS TO INCREASE THE INCOME OF WORKERS AND DECREASE THEIR OUTLAY. HE BELIEVED STATE WOULD ARRANGE FOR WAGE INCREASES UNDER PRESENT EIGHT-LEVEL SYSTEM IN UPCOMING

FIVE-YEAR PLAN.

4. WUHAN CTS GUIDE IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION CONFIRMED THAT SOME GANG FOLLOWERS IN THE HUPEI PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT WERE UNDERGOING MASS CRITICISM, INCLUDING "A FEW" IN THE PROVINCIAL REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE (HE NAMED NO SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS). HE BELIEVED THESE OFFICIALS WOULD BE TREATED LENIENTLY IF THEY ADMITTED THEIR MISTAKES, BUT THAT THE GANG OF FOUR ITSELF WOULD BE DRUMMED OUT OF THE PARTY.

5. AT NANNIWAN MAY 7 SCHOOL IN SHENSI PROVINCE (FOR CADRE OF SIAN MUNICIPALITY), SCHOOL'S VICE DIRECTOR ECHOED WUHAN REMARKS ON TREATMENT OF GANG FOLLOWERS AT GRASSROOTS LEVEL. HE ADDED THAT WHILE THE POLICY IS TO EDUCATE AND NOT TO PUNISH, GIVING THE FOLLOWER A CHANCE TO REALIZE HIS MISTAKES AND ADMIT THEM, AN EXCEPTION MUST BE MADE FOR THOSE WHO "POINTED THE SPEARHEAD" AT CHAIRMANS MAO AND HUA AND THE PARTY CENTRAL. THESE "DIE-HARDS" MUST BE PUNISHED SEVERELY. BUT THERE ARE VERY FEW IN THIS CATEGORY, AND NONE ARE SENT TO HIS MAY 7 SCHOOL. INSTEAD, THEY ARE DEALT WITH IN THEIR OWN UNITS.

6. THE VICE DIRECTOR ALSO COMMENTED ON TENG HSIAO-PING IN NO DOUBT STANDARD TERMS: "COMRADE" TENG MADE MISTAKES IN HIS WORK, BUT THESE CANNOT POSSIBLY BE COMPARED TO THE TOWERING CRIMES OF THE GANG OF FOUR. LIKE ANY CADRE WHO MAKES MISTAKES AND THEN
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PAGE 03 PEKING 01070 260925Z

ADMITS THEM, "COMRADE" TENG CAN "CERTAINLY" BE ALLOWED TO RESUME WORK.
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